

# CITY OF CUPERTINO SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Teleconference meeting without a physical location.

Thursday, March 24, 2022 4:00 p.m.

## SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

At 4:06 p.m. Commissioner Weber called the meeting to order, acting on behalf of the Chair.

### ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Commissioners Sonali Padgaonkar, Steve Poon, Meera Ramanathan (arrived @ 4:07 p.m.), Anna Weber. Absent: Chair Swaminathan.

Staff: André Duurvoort, Sustainability Manager; Gilee Corral, Climate and Utilities Analyst; Rina Horie, Sustainability Intern.

Guests: Members of the public.

### STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

**Staff reports:** Sustainability Manager André Duurvoort gave brief updates:

- City Work Program: process is underway with project ranking. The Commission proposal for building and transportation electrification strategy was ranked highly among 60+ projects.
- Earth and Arbor Day Festival: 64 tabling partners, about 80 volunteers, and six sponsors. The Commission will have a table as well. Social media posts and postcards being mailed to promote the Festival.
- Climate Action Plan (CAP): project team is consolidating comments and feedback into the draft CAP. Aim to release the public review draft CAP by April 19 to the engagement website ahead of the Earth and Arbor Day Festival. Draft includes measures to achieve the 2030 goal. After engagement and outreach, will have a Council study session in May or June.

Gilee Corral, Climate and Utilities Analyst, gave an overview of the Mayor's Meetings. Corral emails the Commission to recruit a representative for each meeting. She noted the next Commission meeting on April 21 will be in person, venue to be determined.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### 1. Subject: Commissioners elect Chair

Corral gave brief reminders of the process for nominating and electing the Chair and Vice Chair and answered clarifying questions, including:

- Corral affirmed that the Commission can nominate an absent Commissioner for Chair (question from Ramanathan)
- If meeting attendance record is available for the existing Commissioners (Poon). Corral: this is public record and attendance for each meeting is included in the minutes on the City website.

*Public Comment:*

Anushka Kamaran, Riya Murthy, and Charlotte Zhou spoke on the severe drought in Santa Clara County. Spoke of the benefits of recycled water and gray water systems, noting potential savings of millions of gallons of water per day in demand. They noted examples from LA County, San Jose, Sunnyvale, Las Vegas, Australia, and Singapore. Support the City to explore installing grey water systems beyond Apple Campus, e.g. in residential areas and City buildings.

Commission Weber opened the floor for nominations for Chair. Commissioners Weber and Ramanathan gave a brief overview of the Commission, its history, and relationship with City staff for the benefit of the new Commissioners. Corral added a brief explanation of the role of the Chair and Vice Chair. Commissioner Ramanathan noted that both she and Commissioner Weber have been Chair and Vice Chair.

Commissioner Ramanathan nominated Vignesh Swaminathan for Chair. Corral noted briefly how the rotation of Chair and Vice Chair is conducted, that a Commissioner can nominate themselves for either role, and other logistics of the nomination process.

Commissioner Ramanathan moved and Commissioner Padgaonkar seconded to close nominations for Chair. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Swaminathan absent.

Commission Padgaonkar moved and Commissioner Ramanathan seconded to elect Vignesh Swaminathan as Chair of the Commission. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Swaminathan absent.

## **2. Subject: Commissioners elect Vice Chair**

Commission Weber opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair. Commissioner Weber nominated herself for Vice Chair.

Commissioner Ramanathan moved to close nominations for Vice Chair. Commissioner Padgaonkar noted she was not interested in the position this year. Commissioner Poon seconded the motion to close nominations. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Swaminathan absent.

Commissioner Ramanathan moved and Commissioner Padgaonkar seconded to elect Anna Weber as Vice Chair of the Commission. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Swaminathan absent.

## **3. Subject: Review submitted nominations for 2022 CREST Awards Sustainability Champion of the Year**

Corral gave a brief overview of the CREST Awards and the process to select the Sustainability Champion of the Year. The two nominations for the Sustainability Champion of the year are previous Sustainability Commissioner Gary Latshaw and Shilpa Iyer. All CREST winners will be announced on the City website. She requested that Commissioners select their first and second choices, and whichever nominee receives the most first place votes will become the winner. She reviewed the nomination packet briefly on screen.

The Commission discussed the nominees, asked questions, and gave comments, including:

- Second nomination seems more on community building than sustainability (Poon)
  - o The project was community focused on a sustainability topic, thinks the second nomination is appropriate for the award (Weber)
- Clarify award criteria (Weber, Padgaonkar). Corral reviewed the criteria in the packet, noted the nominee did not have to be a Cupertino resident.

- First choice: Gary Latshaw, second choice: Shilpa Iyer. Latshaw worked on sustainability in Cupertino, Iyer's submission seems more of a proposal than a project (Padgaonkar)
- Iyer worked on a project to bring the community together around sustainability and inclusivity in a Cupertino neighborhood (Weber)
- Iyer's project a good idea, like the inclusivity and sustainability, good documentation, but do not see what the effects have been in Cupertino from the project. Would like to see more data points on the effects to give an award. First choice: Gary Latshaw, close second choice: Shilpa Iyer (Ramanathan)
- Pointed out examples of results of Iyer's project in the submission, thinks there were actions taken and data on the Nextdoor project and not just a model. The model she tested brought people together on sustainability topics, reflecting what we are here to do as a Commission (Weber)
- Brief discussion on the scope of the nominations:
  - o Would like to have seen Iyer's project for all of Cupertino on Nextdoor, was impacting Monta Vista specifically (Ramanathan). Iyer's was hyperlocal but showed potential to expand to more neighborhoods as a model (Weber)
  - o Latshaw is more than just a Sustainability Champion. Considering his multiple volunteer roles and extensive work in the community, e.g. Rotary, Sierra Club, he should a Lifetime Achievement CREST Award (Weber)
- Corral explained Commissioner terms and answered other logistical questions.
- What happens if a tie (Ramanathan). Corral: unsure but can ask the Communications Office
- First choice: Gary Latshaw. The second nominee did a lot of groundwork for future results (Poon)
- First choice: Shilpa Iyer, second choice: Gary Latshaw (Weber)
- Corral noted three votes for Gary Latshaw for first choice and one vote for Shilpa Iyer for first choice.
- If a person that wins one CREST award is eligible for future CREST awards (Weber, Ramanathan). Corral: this is not specifically stated on the website, the only exclusions in the rules are current Councilmembers, Commissioners, and City staff. Can clarify with Communications Office and can give feedback from the Commission that this is desired.
- Latshaw is a Sustainability Champion but deserves a Lifetime Achievement Award. Iyer's project brought people together during the pandemic to share and learn about sustainability, can be an inspiration to others (Weber)
- Can "honorable mention" be given to Iyer (Ramanathan). Corral: clarified with the Communications Office - only one winner per award. Can note Commissioners expressed a desire for an "honorable mention" category.
  - o Other options, can invite Iyer to present at a speaker series or present to Commission (Weber)
- Noted that the CREST Award voting took place at the Mayor's Meeting, reception for the winners in May. Please keep winner confidential until winners are announced officially (Weber)
- Suggest asking the Sustainability Champion and runner up to speak at the Earth and Arbor Day Festival (Poon)

Commissioner Padgaonkar moved and Commissioner Poon seconded to select Dr. Gary Latshaw as the winner of the CREST Sustainability Champion of the Year Award. Ayes: Padgaonkar, Poon, Ramanathan. Noes: Weber. Absent: Swaminathan. The motion carried.

Vice Chair moved and Commissioner Poon seconded to select Shilpa Iyer as the Sustainability Champion of the Year. Commission Ramanathan asked if it was possible to vote on the same item twice. Corral clarified that

technically the Commission has already voted for Gary Latshaw as the Sustainability Champion of the Year. If the current motion on the table passes, the Commission will have voted for two Sustainability Champions of the Year. Corral noted that she is unsure if the Communications Office will give two awards for the Sustainability Champion of the Year. Vice Chair Weber withdrew her motion.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Corral answered clarifying questions about the April 21 regular meeting: this meeting will be in person at a physical location with no Zoom or virtual option. Council and some Commission meetings will be moving to hybrid meetings and instructions for participation will be detailed in published agendas.

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Ramanathan and seconded by Commissioner Poon. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Swaminathan absent. Meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.