

CITY OF CUPERTINO SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Teleconference meeting without a physical location.

Thursday, May 21, 2020 4:00 p.m.

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

At 4:02 p.m. Chair Latshaw called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Chair Gary Latshaw, Vice Chair Vignesh Swaminathan, and Commissioners Ram Mohan, Meera Ramanathan, Anna Weber. Absent: None.

Staff: André Duurvoort, Sustainability Manager; Roger Lee, Director of Public Works; Ursula Syrova, Environmental Programs Manager; Gilee Corral, Climate and Utilities Analyst.

Guests: John Zirelli, General Manager, Recology; members of the public.

Chair Latshaw read a statement regarding provisions of the Brown Act and a recent Executive Order issued by the Governor to facilitate teleconferencing to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission at public meetings.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Latshaw asked if any comments on the January 16, 2020 and February 20, 2020 meetings. Commissioner Weber requested an amendment of the February 20, 2020 minutes to reflect her as “absent” in the vote for Chair and Vice Chair elections. Vice Chair Swaminathan moved and Commissioner Ramanathan seconded to approve the minutes from January 16, 2020. The motion carried unanimously. Vice Chair Swaminathan moved and Commissioner Mohan seconded to approve the minutes from February 20, 2020 as amended. The motion carried: Ayes: Latshaw, Swaminathan, Mohan, Ramanathan; Noes: None; Abstentions: Weber; Absent: None.

Chair Latshaw noted that Public Works Director Roger Lee wished to attend the Recology item and would be arriving later. Commissioner Ramanathan moved and Commissioner Mohan seconded to reorder the agenda to move the Recology item toward the end of the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

POSTPONEMENTS - None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Latshaw opened public comment and the following individual spoke:

André Duurvoort, Sustainability Manager (City of Cupertino) thanked the Commission for hosting the meeting remotely and expressed appreciation for their flexibility, welcomed Commissioner Mohan to the Commission.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None.

NEW BUSINESS

3. Subject: Sustainability Grants for Students program request to extend deadline of March 31, 2020

Gilee Corral gave a brief overview of the situation with school closures and a summary of student requests to extend the deadline for the program and adjustment of project scope; \$165 has currently been paid to recipients total for the projects to date. She answered clarifying questions from the Commission: if updates have been received from the students; specifics of the students' requests; review of the project requests.

Chair Latshaw opened public comment and the following individual spoke:

Anna on behalf of a grant recipient, Eve, talked about the school closure delaying a decision by the Montclair gardening club on what to purchase, and spoke in favor of extending the deadline preferably through the fall, but at least a week. She answered clarifying questions from Chair Latshaw.

Chair Latshaw closed public comment and asked the Commission to consider extending the deadline to the end of December. The Commission discussed the options, including:

- Extend deadline for all recipients, keep it simple (Mohan).
- Specific requests from each recipient, documentation of requests (Weber).
- Concern if school will be open for on-site instruction in the fall, may need to revisit if not (Ramanathan, Swaminathan).
- Possibility of combining with FY21 program to enable flexibility (Swaminathan).

Staff noted that funding is available through the end of June 2020; if the deadline was extended, staff would request carrying over the funds through June 2021.

Commissioner Ramanathan moved and Commissioner Mohan seconded to extend the deadline for receipts and reports for the Sustainability Grants for Students program to December 31, 2020. The motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

2. Subject: Update from Public Works Environmental Programs Division staff on progress negotiating a new franchise agreement with Recology

Public Works Director Roger Lee introduced the topic and gave a brief overview of the public process relating to the Recology agreement. He noted issues under consideration include a sensitivity to rate increases, desire to preserve and expand services, and new state regulations.

Environmental Programs Manager Ursula Syrova updated the Commission on the April Council meeting and next steps:

- City authorized to negotiate a new 10-year agreement with Recology.
- Next steps and estimated timeline: Proposal from Recology expected in August, Council Study Session in September, followed by period of negotiations and adoption in November / December.
- Outreach will occur in summer / fall. Requested Commission feedback on topics to address in a residential survey.
- Discussions and planning with Recology on compliance with SB 1383.
- Update Commission on progress at future meeting, i.e. July.

Staff answered clarifying questions from Commissioners: Sunnyvale's food waste diversion program and how it differs from Cupertino's; survey will be randomized and sent to 400 residents and may also be available online.

Chair Latshaw opened public comment and the following individual spoke:

John Zirelli (Recology) noted other staff also attending the call, commented that Sunnyvale's program only diverts food waste and not soiled paper, waxy cardboard, paper towels, etc.

Chair Latshaw opened discussion. Staff asked Commissioners to think about ideas and feedback to bring back to the discussion at the July meeting.

NEW BUSINESS (continued)

4. Subject: Review submitted nominations for 2020 CREST Awards Sustainability Champion of the Year

Chair Latshaw recused himself from discussion and voting on this item and asked Vice Chair Swaminathan to lead discussion on Item 4. Corral introduced the topic briefly and described the CREST Awards program. The City received two nominations for the Sustainability Champion of the Year Award. The CREST Awards ceremony was canceled due to COVID-19.

Vice Chair Swaminathan opened public comment (no comment received) and opened the item for discussion. Corral reviewed each nominee's application on the screen: Cupertino Youth Climate Action Team (CYCAT) and Silicon Valley Clean Energy (SVCE). General agreement from the Commission that both nominees were worthy and strong candidates. Topics and comments from Commissioners included:

- Leaning toward SVCE because of their contributions to Cupertino's clean energy future, especially this year (Weber).
- CYCAT attractive because it's youth-focused and Cupertino-focused, want to send message for youth to lead (Mohan).
- Purpose of CREST Award is impact in Cupertino, SVCE has changed Cupertino, whereas CYCAT has not yet made a significant impact (Ramanathan).
- Like to encourage youth to continue to be involved and work toward solutions and policy. Recommends SVCE as it continues to surprise us on growth, funding, and impact in Cupertino (Swaminathan).

Commissioner Weber moved and Commissioner Ramanathan seconded to award the Sustainability Champion of the Year CREST Award to Silicon Valley Clean Energy. The motion passed: Ayes: Mohan, Ramanathan, Weber, Swaminathan; Noes: None; Abstentions: Latshaw; Absent: None.

5. Subject: Review outstanding items on Sustainability Commission FY 2019-20 Work Program

Corral briefly introduced the item and reviewed the status of the FY 2019-20 Work Program projects. She noted the disruption of projects caused by the cancellation of Commission meetings due to COVID-19 and requested the Commission to prioritize items to complete by June 30. She answered clarifying questions:

- (Weber / Latshaw) Question re 2020-21 Work Program process: Commission proposals were considered as part of the City 2020-21 Work Program adoption process; Council will adopt its Work Program in early June. The Commission Work Programs will be based on items from the City Work Program.
- (Mohan) Question re status of items in 2019-20 Work Program: Commission decides which items are complete; staff recommended closing out the following items: proactive legislative advocacy, youth engagement, community outreach. Items are not automatically carried over to the next year.
- Chair Latshaw left the meeting for a few minutes.

Vice-Chair Swaminathan opened public comment. Chair Latshaw returned to the meeting and the following individual spoke:

André Duurvoort, Sustainability Manager (City of Cupertino) requested the Commission add the Green Building Ordinance item to the June 18 meeting for discussion to address Council's request on this item.

Chair Latshaw closed public comment and opened discussion. Topics raised included:

- Clarify difference between Envision Standards and LEED (Latshaw), answered by Swaminathan. Suggest removing this item from the list (Swaminathan).
- Keep Buy Clean update on list (Swaminathan).
- GHG inventory frequency: suggest removing this item and continue 3-year inventory timeframe (Swaminathan, Latshaw, Ramanathan). Staff noted that the CAP Update will include a GHG inventory update.
- Concerns over GHG methodology accuracy, i.e. direct access energy, inclusion of error bars in future inventories (Latshaw). Staff can present this item at the next meeting.
- Interest in disruption of COVID-19 and impact on GHG data (Swaminathan). Direct access energy usage affected by COVID-19 this year, likely to reflect lower emissions (Ramanathan).

The Chair reviewed each item and via consensus the Commission determined the following items as "closed / complete" or "ongoing for discussion / keep":

- Proactive legislation: ongoing / keep
- Green Building Ordinance: ongoing / keep
- Buy Clean Update: ongoing / keep
- Youth engagement: closed / complete
- CAP methodology: closed / complete
- Speaker Series: closed / complete
- Envision Standards: closed / complete

Chair Latshaw noted an upcoming Zoom Climate Speaker Series by youth, the first event is May 30, including an interview with Girish Balachandran, CEO of Silicon Valley Clean Energy (SVCE).

STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Staff updates:

- Green Building Ordinance Subcommittee met; request Commission address the Green Building Ordinance at its June meeting.

- SVCE created an est. \$10 million COVID-19 relief package for workforce development, customer bill credit, resiliency infrastructure for member cities. Staff to review with Commission at June meeting.
- Webinar on waste sorting hosted by Environmental Programs Division on May 27 at 1:00 pm.
- Sustainability Division newsletter went to email listserv today.
- Virtual Earth Day site – over 200 views on Earth Day.

FUTURE AGENDA SETTING

The Commission agreed to the items on the screen, wording reflected below:

June 18

- Recology update
- Accuracy of GHG methodology
- Green building ordinance – update and vote
- Proactive legislation
- FY21 Work program
- Buy Clean update

Future:

- Grant opportunities discussion – for resiliency / CAP projects

Commissioner Ramanathan moved to add the items as listed on the screen on the June 18 meeting. After a brief discussion and clarification to also include the “future” item on grant opportunities discussion to the June 18 meeting, Vice Chair Swaminathan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Weber and seconded by Commissioner Ramanathan. The motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.