

CITY OF CUPERTINO SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Teleconference meeting without a physical location.

Thursday, January 21, 2021 4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

At 4:03 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; Victoria Morin, Outreach Coordinator; Gilee Corral, Climate and Utilities Analyst.

Guests: 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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Subject: Minutes from December 17, 2020 meeting

Vice Chair Swaminathan moved and Commissioner Ramanathan seconded to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

At the request of staff, a motion was made by Commissioner Ramanathan and seconded by Vice Chair Swaminathan to move Staff and Commission Reports after Written Communications. The motion carried unanimously.

POSTPONEMENTS

None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Gilee Corral, Staff Liaison, read three minutes of an attachment emailed to the Commission from Dan Marshall. The document will be uploaded to the public meeting site. Chair Latshaw permitted the individuals to act as a group for a total of ten minutes to address the Commission. In response to questions from Chair Latshaw, Corral confirmed that items raised by members of the public during Oral Communications that are not on the published agenda may not be discussed by the Commission during the meeting. Commissioners may ask clarifying questions or add the subject to the Future Agenda Setting items list.

- Dan Marshall (Cupertino resident) requested the Commission's support to request that the Council sign a draft resolution endorsement related to a carbon fee and dividend national policy (submitted Written Communications).
- John Ennals (Cupertino resident) requested the Commission to support a recommendation to Council to sign the endorsement regarding climate change. He talked about the role of market forces in

addressing climate change and noted that market-based approach such as a carbon fee and dividend is supported by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the American Petroleum Institute.

The Commission asked clarifying questions of the speakers, including:

- If the speakers are members of the Citizens Climate Lobby and if this is part of HR 763 (Latshaw)
 - o Marshall confirmed membership of the CCL but said this request was not related to HR 763, just support of the concept of carbon fee and dividend.
 - o Chair Latshaw noted his prior affiliation with the CCL and commented on a previous bill the CCL had put forward and a recent article on the topic.
- Logic of a national versus a statewide approach to this type of legislation, stance of the Air Resources Board (Mohan), if a current law is being considered (Ramanathan).
 - o Marshall responded that a state by state approach would be chaotic; he noted that there is no current bill but one was proposed in 2020 that did not become law. He clarified that their request was to support the concept of putting a fee on carbon and returning the funds to citizens, not any particular bill.
- Clarity on what the speakers are requesting, how the money would be distributed (Swaminathan).
 - o Marshall responded that it was not to support detailed components of a bill but rather endorsing the concept. He explained the proposed method of distributing the funds to households. He noted that the Silicon Valley Leadership Council endorsed the concept.
- Marshall responded to additional questions around the concept, how the value would be calculated, etc. Chair Latshaw noted the complexity of the topic and resources to reference. Corral will add the subject for consideration under Future Agenda Setting.
- If other neighboring cities have adopted or worked on a similar resolution (Weber). Marshall said Los Altos and Palo Alto. The draft resolution Marshall proposed is modeled after Los Altos'. He offered support if the Commission wished to hold a special session on the topic.
- Question of timing (Swaminathan); Chair Latshaw noted federal legislation on climate is likely to be passed in the next 100 days.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Corral noted an item that was posted to the meeting website: emails from Vice Mayor Chao. Corral answered clarifying questions related to the Brown Act and other questions from the Commissioners. She noted that no action from the Commission or individual Commissioners was required. The Commission moved on to the next topic and no action was taken.

STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Staff reports: Sustainability Manager André Duurvoort gave brief updates and answered clarifying questions:

- Duurvoort reviewed some of the Green Building features of the Library expansion capital improvement project; he gave a brief overview of its efficiency features
- Climate Action Plan Update consultant team selection process for community outreach and technical support; likely to receive six to twelve bids; aiming for consultant to start March 1
 - o Consultants are a niche group; wrote the RFP to accommodate / attract proposals from a diversity of firms; requested a workforce disclosure form; assuming engagement activities will be remote (response to questions from Swaminathan)

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

2. Subject: Order of Sustainability Commission default agenda items

Corral related staff's recommendation to adjust the default Commission agenda to move Staff and Commission Reports towards the beginning of the agenda after Written Communications and before Old Business. She answered clarifying technical questions.

Commissioner Ramanathan moved and Vice Chair Swaminathan seconded to adjust the order of the default Commission agenda items as recommended by staff. Corral answered brief clarifying questions. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Subject: Earth and Arbor Day planning

Victoria Morin, Outreach Coordinator, gave a brief presentation on Earth and Arbor Day plans. The format for 2021 will be virtual and a "speaker series" style with videos. She requested the Commission to appoint a designee to act as the "voice of the Commission" for the video series. This would involve recording one to three scripted videos, including a welcome and closing video. The Commission asked clarifying questions and briefly discussed the request:

- Questions on format and date of event (Latshaw, Weber). Morin: clarified that the event will be one "virtual event day" to combine Earth Day and Arbor Day. Earth Day is April 22, and the virtual event day would be on a weekend before or after Earth Day.
- Chair Latshaw asked for volunteers for the role of Commissioner designee: Ramanathan volunteered and Swaminathan volunteered to be the back-up.
- What anniversary year this is (Weber). Morin: It's the 51st global Earth Day and around the thirteenth year Cupertino has celebrated Earth Day.

Commissioner Weber moved and Vice Chair Swaminathan seconded to nominate Commissioner Ramanathan as the Commission designee for the Earth and Arbor Day virtual event. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Subject: Staff update on youth engagement activities and programming

Duurvoort gave a brief recap of the program and an update. He welcomed the two new interns, Manpreet Chandok (student at San Jose State University) and Ritu Atreyas (student at Monta Vista High School). They are developing individual projects for student engagement and single use plastics; both will be working on Earth Day planning. Chandok introduced herself. In response to a question from Commissioner Ramanathan, Duurvoort noted that the intern program will support existing staff work, including the CAP update project and student and community engagement.

5. Subject: Chair and Vice Chair Elections

Staff and the Commission acknowledged the service of Chair Latshaw and Vice Chair Swaminathan during a difficult year. She reviewed logistics of the nomination and election process.

Chair Latshaw opened nominations for Commission Chair for the term ending January 30, 2022.

Commissioner Ramanathan nominated Vice Chair Swaminathan. Commissioner Weber nominated Chair Latshaw. Chair Latshaw declined the nomination. Corral answered clarifying questions.

Commissioner Weber moved and Commissioner Mohan seconded to close nominations for Chair. Corral clarified the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Vignesh Swaminathan took over as Chair at 5:34 p.m. and said a few words of looking forward to serving. He noted he is also the Chair of the VTA Citizen Advisory Committee.

Chair Swaminathan opened nominations for Commission Vice Chair for the term ending January 30, 2022. Commissioner Ramanathan nominated Commissioners Mohan, Latshaw, and Weber. Commissioner Latshaw declined the nomination. Chair Swaminathan nominated Commissioner Mohan.

Commissioner Weber moved and Commissioner Latshaw seconded to close nominations for Vice Chair. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Weber moved and Commissioner Ramanathan seconded to elect Ram Mohan as Vice Chair of the Commission. The motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chair Mohan said a few words expressing his appreciation to the Commission and is looking forward to moving forward with the coming year.

FUTURE AGENDA SETTING

Corral brought up the list of Future Agenda Setting items and the Commission discussed possible topics for consideration. Staff requested a Special Meeting be added to the schedule to discuss the CREST Awards Sustainability Champion of the Year nominations. Commissioner Latshaw described a book, *Designing Climate Solutions*, that relates to a carbon fee and dividend topic. Corral answered questions about the Commission's role and scope. Commission agreed to add the two items, "CREST Awards Nominations" and "Carbon policies comparative analysis," to the list. The amended list is as follows:

FUTURE AGENDA SETTING LIST

- Sustainability Speaker Series
- Sustainability Grants for Students / essay contest
- Discuss hosting a public workshop on carbon reduction ideas
- Discuss 2021 Earth & Arbor Day event ideas
- CREST Awards Nominations
- Carbon policies comparative analysis

A motion was made by Commissioner Ramanathan and seconded by Commissioner Weber to include the items above to the Future Agenda Setting List. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Latshaw to schedule a Special Meeting of the Commission for March 18, 2021 to discuss the CREST Awards and other items. The Commission briefly discussed the Commission meeting schedule. Commissioner Ramanathan seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Chair Swaminathan and seconded by Commissioner Weber. The motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:11 p.m.