

MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
June 3, 2015
6:30 PM

AGENDA POSTED: **May 27, 2015**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL: Clerk Solo Faagata logged attendance at introductions.

Present: Commissioners: Jimenez, Zinger,
Hopson, Burr, Mack, Pimentel (and
Salazar who was at City Hall but didn't
find the meeting until late).

Staff Present: Planner Zak Gonzalez II and Senior
Clerk Solo Faagata

SECRETARY'S REPORT

In accordance with the Brown Act, as amended on January 1, 1987, a copy of the Agenda Face Sheet for this meeting was posted in five public places throughout the city designated for the posting of such notices 72 hours prior to this meeting. Via this posting, the requirement has been met to provide the public with adequate notice of all matters to be addressed by the Environmental Commission as this time.

MINUTES APPROVAL

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of the Goals and Objectives of the newly formed Environmental Commission are noted in the Oral Communications section below.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Planner Zak Gonzalez II (ZG2) called the meeting to order at 6:33pm. He opened the meeting with introductions and explained how the Environmental Commission (EC) vacancies are expected to be filled after City Council positions are filled. ZG2 wanted to explore how to make the EC more viable to Carson.

Clerk Solo Faagata (SF) can facilitate communications and basic needs of the EC.

EC Commissioner Julian Jimenez (JJ) is a Union Rep and has been on the EC for more than ten years. His goal is to complete past projects that the EC has started. JJ is pleased to have Z working with the EC.

EC Commissioner Gary Zinger (GZ) has lived in Carson since 2004. He has been president of his association since 2006. His goal is to make sure that each situation is fair, right and the right thing to do. By profession, he works in IT for FFRDC (the aerospace corporation).

EC Commissioner Lilian Hopson (LH) is a retired accountant. She echoes JJ's sentiment in wanting to complete past projects. She is interested in clear air and would like to see land appropriated for gardens.

EC Commissioner Vincent Burr (VB) is a retired union representative. VB is familiar with Z and his work. VB has put a lot of work into health initiative, oil code. A lot of submissions didn't reflect extent of their hard work. He feels the EC is more of an advisory board, and as the Carson community has been upset with past environmental concerns, he would like to complete past projects to make a greater impact on Carson.

EC Commissioner Eleanor Mack (EM) would like to see the EC work on a health initiative that is Carson specific, not including L.A., Gardena or the surrounding area. She's like to make sure that the EC works to ensure that fracking that does not become a method employed by OXY or any other company in Carson. She wants meaningful assignments for the EC that goes beyond table discussion.

EC Commissioner Ramona Pimentel (RP) is informed and interested to learn all areas concerning the environment in Carson.

ZG2 appreciates the EC's insight and reiterates (for the late arrivers) that his background is in environmental analysis. He's worked in Fresno on environmental issues and wants to help the EC become a more viable entity. The EC needs action plans to become more influential and they need tangible projects. The EC is advised to research initiatives for other cities. The EC can assist in identifying cancer clusters in Carson, the general areas, what programs that can be put in place to trigger federal/state investments (in terms of dollars) and private investments from the railroad companies, the ports, and taxes from imports to fix the environment.

VB lives in the 90746, an area recognized for having highest asthma/respiratory problems. He and multiple family members have asthma. Submitted statistical data repeatedly to share car exhaust emissions and effects on Carson and the health of its residents. VB has reviewed ordinances from Richmond, El Monte, Murrieta, Southgate in their aspiration to significantly reduce harmful emissions by 2020. Note: Healthy Community Element.

ZG2 states how the General Plan (GP) was last updated in 2004. State law requires seven elements to the GP, but elements may be added. Some communities have added agricultural elements, economic development element, health elements, and tie them into air quality – make it comprehensive. Model the GP after other cities to make it stronger in weaker areas.

ZG2 stated that the Oil Code update effort should address the unknown factors with the underground pipelines. The City does not know how much deferred maintenance is involved.

It's a status in reactionary mode. Oil companies need to be held accountable for all the petroleum (crude oil, jet fuel, etc) that is running in pipelines under us from place-to-place. ZG2 is currently working on converting the Sears Auto Center into four restaurants (under discussion at this Tuesday's Planning Commission). Appleby's, Chipotle, Mike's Jersey Subs, and Smash Burger will be constructed, but right behind it is fuel lines. Signage states: WARNING! DO NOT DIG HERE – THERE'S FUEL LINES. As residents and commissioners, the EC needs to know what's underneath Carson in order to keep the public safe. The EC needs to be the driving force to become part of the General Plan Update.

EM asks if they can call Shell (and other oil entities) for maps of their pipelines.

ZG2 agrees and further adds that if the EC is reactionary, nothing will change. The EC needs to be proactive if they want to affect change.

VB feels that when the EC submits reports, the Planning Commission (PC) doesn't necessarily look towards their recommendation in moving forward.

JJ recommends "Dig Alert". "Dig Alert" does not charge for their services. Any time digging is done in Carson, they should be summoned.

ZG2 thinks a joint meeting with the CM, CC and/or Mayor to form a committee to focus on local issues that impact more than one commission.

EM states that she and JJ have been on the EC the longest, and mentions the EC goals from the past were ignored.

ZG2 feels whatever element the EC comes up with needs to include a City Council member to give it legitimacy and an action plan to accomplish goals to execute the element that the EC wants to add to the element. The EC needs to write on issues that need to be addressed, so Carson can pull relevant specialists to expand understanding in a workshop setting.

ZG2 suggests getting out into the community for feedback.

VB expressed that the EC tried that, but because they cannot affect change, the community elected not to speak to them.

ZG2 advises the EC to have an action plan to get the authority to regulate, through periodic meetings, by contributing to the General Plan. It's mandated by State Law and every plan coming into the city has to be consistent with it. If there's a plan with an environmental component the EC can champion the cause to regulate it to bring greater safety to Carson. The EC should get other environmental agencies involved.

ZG2 identified that U.S. Cabinet Secretaries have a discretionary fund to fund demonstration projects that can be used as a model. ZG2 recommends creating a demonstration project to help Carson residents' health to apply for grants.

The EC feels they've been placated in the past to keep them excluded from monitoring projects with environmental components.

RP is concerned with the Avalon Project covering a former gas station. Her current employment location deals with recurring issues having been over a former gas station.

ZG2 shares his contact information with the EC. SF is also available to share info and reach ZG2. ZG2 has been with Carson since 2007 and is working the Porsche Project.

The meeting concludes at 7:28pm. It should be noted that EC Commissioner Berwynson Salazar showed up to City Hall for the meeting, but couldn't locate the correct door for the Executive Conference Room.

CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:

ZAK GONZALEZ II, ASSOCIATE PLANNER