



**ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**NOVEMBER 27, 2023
7:00 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

a. The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson Damasco at 7:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

a. Present: Acosta, Khalon, Sese, Shoiato, Wahhab, Damasco

b. Absent: None.

c. Staff Present: Karin Schnaider, Assistant City Manager
Stephanie Reyna-Hiestand, Assistant Director of Utilities
David Murphy, Assistant Director of Operations
John Newman, Operations Superintendent
Necy Lopez, Deputy City Clerk

d. Recorded by: Carla Sorich, Executive Assistant
Isabel Espinosa, Administrative Technician

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Karin Schnaider.

4. ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Veronica Vargas welcomed the new youth commissioners and reminded commission members of their role in policy making.

Jennie Wood welcomed the new Youth Commissioners and requested status update of compliance related to SB379 Solar Access Act which provides streamlined permitting.

Dotty Nygard thanked all the commission members for the opportunity to serve on the commission and advised that she had to resign due to conflict of interest with her nonprofit. She reminded the commission that the Food Waste Program for Businesses begins in January 2024.

5. APPROVAL OF 10/26/2023 MEETING MINUTES

5.A Karin Schnaider, Assistant City Manager recommended that the minutes be pulled for corrections and brought back for approval at the January meeting.

ACTION: Motion was made by Vice Chair Damasco and seconded by Commissioner Kahlon to pull minutes from the October 26, 2023, meeting and bring them back for approval at the January meeting. Roll call found all in favor. All in favor, passed and so ordered. (5,0,0)

6. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON

Karin Schnaider, Assistant City Manager reviewed meeting protocols regarding voting on a new chairperson and vice-chairperson.

There were no commissioner questions.

Vice Chair Damasco nominated Commissioner Acosta for Chairperson; Commissioner Acosta seconded.

Commissioner Kahlon nominated Commissioner Sese for Chairperson; Commissioner Shoaito seconded the motion.

No further nominations were made.

ACTION: Motion was made by Commissioner Kahlon and seconded by Commissioner Shoaito for the election of Commissioner Sese for Chairperson of the Environmental Sustainability Commission. Roll call found Commissioners Kahlon, Shoaito, Acosta, and Wahhab in favor, with Vice-Chairperson Damasco opposing. Passed and so ordered. (4, 0, 1)

7. OLD BUSINESS

7.A REVIEW AND UPDATE ESC 2024 WORKPLAN

- Sustainability Action Plan
- Environmental Compliance
 - Stormwater Pollution Prevention

Stephanie Reyna-Hiestand, Assistant Director -Utilities, provided an update to the Commission. On January 26 the Multi Generation Center Energy Efficiencies and SB746 Hydrogen Facility will be presented as informational items. Informational item on February 22 and the Environmental Sustainability Plan will be brought to the March 28, 2024, meeting.

Public Comment:

Veronica Vargas recommended that sustainability regarding irrigation, recycled water, dual usage of retention basins and parks be added to the work plan.

Dotty Nygard suggested that bike lanes and pedestrian paths be added to the Sustainability Action Plan to promote safe modes of transportation.

Commission questions and comments:

Chair Sese requested more information about bike lane and safety be added to the work plan. ACM Karin Schnaider responded it would have to be brought to the Transportation Advisory Committee.

Youth Commissioner Wahhab added when the Sustainability Action Plan is updated, we should add a way to make bikes a more attractive choice to help reduce emissions and improve public health.

Commissioner Kahlon supported Commissioners Wahhab and Sese regarding bike safety and added providing informational materials to the public would be helpful.

AMC Karin Schnaider clarified that the policy of bike lanes and routes are within the purview of the Transportation Advisory Committee. The Sustainability Action Plan is a Planning document, and the ESC works on policies. This item will be brought back in the future after it is discussed with Planning staff and added to the Work Plan.

Commissioner Kahlon requested a report on air quality in the City of Tracy to support the encouragement of riding bikes.

Commissioner Wahhab requested a report on vehicle miles travelled and how it has changed over time. Also, would like demographics included.

Vice Chair Damasco asked if the Bicycle Master Plan includes information about emissions and would it be possible to have it amended.

ACM Karin Schnaider summarized Commissioner comments and action items to be added to the Work Plan: bike lanes policy, air quality monitoring, vehicle use.

Commissioner Kahlon asked for a recap of public comment to add to work plan.

ACM Karin Schnaider summarized stormwater policies, irrigation, and recycled water, EBike policy.

ACTION: Motion was made by Chairperson Sese and seconded by Vice-Chairperson Damasco to update the ESC 2024 Workplan to include:

- AB1389 Food Recovery Program for Businesses
- Compliance related to SB379 Residential Solar Energy Systems
- Sustainability regarding irrigation, recycled water, dual usage of retention basins
- E-Bike policy recommendation to the Transportation Committee.
- Provide an air quality report related to E-Bike policy.

Roll call found all in favor, passed and so ordered. (5,0,0)

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.A SB355 (EGGMAN) MULTIFAMILY AFFORDABLE HOUSING SOLAR ROOFS PROGRAM

Stephanie Reyna-Hiestand, Assistant Director – Utilities, provided the informational update.

Commission questions and comments followed.

Commissioner Kahlon asked what the next steps would be to benefit the community and if we could send any informational flyers out.

Stephanie Reyna-Hiestand responded there isn't anything the City is able to do. Residents would have to work with local solar providers and power providers to find assistance, if funds are available.

ACM Karin Schnaider also commented that the solar providers typically work with their clients to determine any rebates available to property owners.

Public comment:

Veronica Vargas commented that PG&E has a designated representative for the City of Tracy and inquired if they could be contacted for a presentation on this subject. She also commented that there is not a lot of affordable housing available in Tracy.

Jenny Wood commented that the Commission should request a report of multifamily affordable housing available in Tracy and send out communication to promote this program. Specifically with public housing providers.

Benjamin commented on the importance of affordable housing, as housing in Tracy is as expensive as larger cities like San Francisco.

Dotty Nygard commented that municipal buildings should utilize grant money and transition to solar. She also suggested obtaining a report on grants that the City would qualify for.

Vice Chair Damasco asked what role the City would play in the solar program.

ACM Karin Schnaider clarified that it is an informational item, and it would not lead to policy.

Commissioner Shoaito asked if we could share information about the solar program.

ACM Karin Schnaider clarified it is an operational item and the Commission cannot direct staff or assign work.

ACTION: Informational item – does not require vote

9. STAFF ITEMS (VERBAL REPORT)

Karin Schnaider, Assistant City Manager, shared that during the January meeting, we will have an appointment from the eligibility list to fill a commissioner vacancy. Also, Tracy is the home of the first carbon capture facility, Heirloom Carbon Technologies, and they have offered to do an informational presentation to this Commission.

10. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Wahhab commented he would like to see a report on affordable housing, how many homes qualify, rezoning of areas, grants for funding energy and solar related projects for municipal building.

Commissioner Acosta asked, relating to SB355, how many mobile home parks are in Tracy.

Commissioner Kahlon welcomed the two new youth commissioners and congratulated Chair Sese. She recommended the City look into additional grants for solar for municipal buildings. She also suggested collaborating with Chamber of Commerce on new mandate regarding food waste and using the app Too Good To Go. She also recommended creating an Ad Hoc committee to address and review the Sustainability Action Plan.

ACM Karin Schnaider reviewed meeting protocols with the Commission and clarified that one Commissioner cannot add anything to the work plan themselves, but with a second motion to have it added.

Vice Chair Damasco asked to review the East Bay Community Energy relationship with the City of Tracy during the January meeting.

Commissioner Shoaito suggested that information regarding AB1389 and the Too Good To Go app be added to the Work Plan.

11. ADJOURNMENT – Time: 8:20 PM

ACTION: Motion was made by Sese and seconded by Vice Chair Damasco to adjourn. Roll call found all in favor; passed and so ordered. (5,0,0)