

THESE MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE  
CULVER CITY STANDING SUSTAINABILITY SUBCOMMITTEE  
OF THE CITY COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CULVER CITY  
STANDING SUSTAINABILITY SUBCOMMITTEE  
OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

March 12 2026  
6:00 p.m.

**Call to Order & Roll Call**

Mayor Puza called the special hybrid meeting of the Standing Sustainability Subcommittee of the City Council to order at 6:02 p.m. in the Dan Patacchia Meeting Room.

Present:           Freddy Puza, Mayor  
                  Yasmine-Imani McMorrin, Council Member

Staff Present: Sean Singletary, Environmental Programs and  
  Operations (EPO) Manager  
                  Otis Belisle, Environmental Compliance Inspector  
                  Shetauna Smith, Environmental Coordinator  
                  Alicia Ide, Senior Management Analyst

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**Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Puza led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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**Community Announcement from Members**

None.

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**Information Items from Staff**

Alicia Ide, Senior Management Analyst, provided an announcement from Joe Susca on behalf of the Clean Power Alliance (CPA); indicated that since 2019 the CPA had been purchasing electricity on behalf of the entire Culver City community delivered using Southern California Edison (SCE) powerlines; discussed the objective to increase the amount of clean energy used; different tiers; the default tier City-wide; the ability of customers to

switch tiers any time; 95% of residents have remained in the 100% green tier level; she announced that the contract for the portable battery project had been signed with Humble; discussed successful tests at the Farmers Market and at the 5K event; and requirements that organizers use Culver City-provided no cost electric generators rather than gas generators at all City events.

Sean Singletary, Environmental Programs and Operations (EPO) Manager, indicated that Wallis Nash had been promoted to the Transportation Department; he introduced Environmental Compliance Inspector Otis Belisle, who has been conducting inspections of local businesses for compliance with local waste reduction regulations; and he introduced Environmental Coordinator Shetauna Smith who will be assisting with subcommittee meetings going forward.

Shetauna Smith, Environmental Coordinator, announced Envirofest 2026, an upcoming environmental event on Saturday, May 2, 2026, at the Wende Museum including collections, vendor booths, a tree giveaway, and composting activities.

Mayor Puza welcomed Shetauna Smith and Otis Belisle.

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**Public Comment - Items NOT On the Agenda**

Council Member McMorris invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

Amy Tierney, Sustainable Works/Balanced Approach, provided background on the organization; discussed work to make businesses aware of benefits provided by Culver City; receipt of free education through the non-profit on behalf of Culver City; resource savings; certified businesses; enrollment of businesses; and she asked for referrals noting that she or Co-Executive Director, Susie Borlito would be happy to speak to anyone who was interested or they could go to the Culver City sustainable certification website or visit [sustainableworks.org](http://sustainableworks.org).

Susie Borlito, Sustainable Works, echoed comments from the previous speaker; indicated that there were a few spaces available for enrollment; noted challenges enrolling businesses this year; discussed turmoil and changes; the 2025 fires; new people on the Culver City Environmental team; eagerness to work with Culver City; and businesses served by the program since 2018.

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**Receipt of Correspondence**

MOVED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MCMORRIN, SECONDED BY MAYOR PUZA AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE STANDING SUSTAINABILITY SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE CITY COUNCIL RECEIVE AND FILE CORRESPONDENCE.

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**Consent Calendar**

Item C-1

**Approval of Minutes for the Standing Sustainability Subcommittee Meeting of January 8, 2026**

Alicia Ide, Senior Management Analyst, noted a staff-suggested amendment to the minutes at the bottom of page four for clarity regarding the Subcommittee's direction from that meeting noting that staff's understanding was that the direction was twofold: (1) to send the resolution to the City Council using the draft language with one change to item three, replacing the word "integrating" with "exploring and planning," and (2) to have staff return to the Subcommittee with potential implementation plans and impact information; she requested insertion of the following language before the last sentence of the last paragraph on page four: "Direct staff to send the resolution to City Council without delay using the draft resolution text with one key change to item three, replacing the word 'integrating' with 'exploring and planning.'" "

MOVED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MCMORRIN, SECONDED BY MAYOR PUZA AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE STANDING SUSTAINABILITY SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE SPECIAL MEETING ON JANUARY 8, 2026 AS AMENDED.

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**Action Items**

Item A-1

**Receive and Discuss a Presentation by Greener Way Associates Regarding Building Climate-Resilient Communities**

Suzanne Debenedittis, Greener Way Associates, provided background on the organization and its more than 20 years of pro bono community sustainability work; discussed community resilience and

disaster preparedness; earthquake preparedness; and the importance of trees and urban agriculture for carbon sequestration.

Carlos Paz, Greener Way Associates, indicated being an on-the-job training (OJT) re-entry employee, and he shared his experience with the organization and its positive impact on his personal growth.

Suzanne Debenedittis, Greener Way Associates, invited everyone to visit when the Los Angeles/San Gabriel Valley Chapter of the California Landscapers' Association would be at Greener Way on March 19; discussed modelling best practices in sustainability as the climate changes; installation of subsurface irrigation; support for lawns for recreation areas; rainwater sequestering; getting neighborhoods organized; the need for community collaboration to become resilient; the UN's Earth Charter; core values; the importance of engaging high school kids; a student participant who went on to get a Hydrology degree at Stanford; educational and hands-on training; benefits to Culver City; collaboration while negotiating changes; benefits to Culver City; and validating the mental health benefits of gardening.

RJ Cortanta, Greener Way Associates, provided a slide presentation covering the organization's history and mission of "planting kindness"; discussed the four Earth Charter values; organic harvests including bananas, oranges, arugula, and avocados; bioretention systems for rainwater capture; a partnership with JVS SoCal providing paid OJT placements for re-entry and system-impacted youth; saving the planet while providing produce to the community; and a summary of the organization's carbon sequestration accomplishments and community impact.

Suzanne Debenedittis, Greener Way Associates, discussed dry farming; success with OJT and re-entry employment programs; food that depends on pollination; commitment to environmental work and connection to community; 40+ years of organic harvests through the Greener Way garden; previous community organizing efforts; grants received from the Freedom Farm program and the CivLab private foundation; she praised City Arborist David Talavera; and invited everyone to visit the garden to see subsurface irrigation, rainwater bioretention systems, and native plant installations.

Mayor Puza invited public comment.

Alicia Ide, Senior Management Analyst, indicated that no requests to speak had been received.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding

appreciation for the presentation and the work and commitment of the organization; potential partnership mechanisms through neighborhood associations and community gardens; the new City Manager's community engagement outreach efforts; the City's history with shared community garden programs; deference to staff on identifying specific partnership opportunities; support for exploring ways to integrate the organization's work into existing City programs; and a request for a specific written proposal or MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) from the organization outlining what is being requested from the City.

Additional discussion ensued between the presenters, staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding the organization's specific asks, including: use of a City chipper shredder for regenerative landscaping training and demonstrations; collaboration with the City Arborist regarding mulch availability; sharing resources; incentivizing people to think; pilot programs to help people set an example; growing healthy pest-resilient foods without chemicals; rainwater storage; potential partnership with the Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) Department in connection with its community garden planning and parks plan; the intent to start a worker-owned business; potential for stipends for youth participants; and the desire to align the organization's work with City priorities around clean air, rainwater capture and reuse, and community resilience.

Additional discussion ensued between the presenters, staff, and Committee Members regarding creation of an MOU; a request that Greener Way submit a proposal; and direction to staff to set up meetings with EPO and PRCS to explore partnership opportunities.

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Item A-3  
(Out of Sequence)

**(1) Discussion of Enforcement Options for Restrictions on Balloons, Plastic Carry-Out Bags, and Single-Use Plastic Bottles;**  
**(2) Recommendation to City Council**

Sean Singletary, EPO Manager, indicated that the item was a follow up from the last meeting; discussed understanding the enforcement horizon and capacity of Code Enforcement; and enforcement tiers: civilian-led enforcement, complaint-led enforcement, and inspection-led enforcement.

Marian Aspnes, Enforcement Services Manager, provided an overview of current Code Enforcement staffing and capacity; indicated that

the division had received approximately 1,200 complaints in the prior year, well in excess of the typical per-officer capacity of 300 to 350 cases; described current priority areas including substandard housing, unpermitted construction, property maintenance issues, massage establishment inspections, cannabis inspections, homeless outreach, and Section 8 housing inspections; prioritization of life safety issues; special projects for Housing; concern that officers are stretched thin; her efforts on more difficult cases; she indicated that they would work on whatever the City Council directs them to do; and she indicated that additional enforcement would require additional resources.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding costs for two additional officers needed to make a meaningful impact; the possibility of bicycle enforcement depending on the issue; required safety training; use of drones; policy and privacy issues; hybrid enforcement; outreach by EPO; lack of compliance; escalation to fines and legal action; addressing reluctance or defiance; the current focus on tenant protections, life safety issues, unpermitted construction, property maintenance, substandard housing, and noise complaints; the current complaint-led process whereby EPO takes the lead; items that do not fit in with current regulations; persistent issues; and addressing issues with education and repeated visits before escalating to enforcement with citations.

Mayor Puza invited public comment.

The following member of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

Jack Galanty discussed the importance of public-facing signage for both businesses and customers informing them of prohibited items; the need for employees to feel safe reporting violations without fear of management repercussions; support for complaint-led enforcement paired with adequate signage and advance notice to businesses; reminding customers of the effective date; and a recommendation that the implementation grace period not exceed one year to limit stockpiling of prohibited items.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding support for complaint-led enforcement with EPO-led inspections as the most feasible path given staffing constraints; sustainability; separate consideration of enforcement with regard to smoking; the request for additional information about logistics; appreciation for the leadership of Code Enforcement and transparency about capacity; helping the community understand the need for additional support; the educational focus; use of mascots; escalating outreach to reach people in different areas and age groups; the

different funding source for EPO; regulations that require inspections; consultants who can free up staff; the value of education, outreach, and repeated visits by EPO before escalation to citation; existing EPO inspector outreach to approximately 100 businesses in recent months; a request that EPO provide regular reporting on the number of referrals and any trends in non-compliance; agreement to bring balloons, plastic carry-out bags, and single-use plastic bottles to the City Council for action; returning to the Subcommittee with additional information on outdoor smoking and artificial turf before moving forward to the City Council; and confirmation that the 18-month phase-in period begins from the date the City Council adopts the relevant ordinances.

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Item A-2

**Receive and Discuss a Report Regarding Green Infrastructure Alleyways in Los Angeles by SALT Landscape Architects and the Trust for Public Land**

Alan Compton, Salt Landscape Architects, provided a correction to the agenda item noting that Robin Marks previously worked at the Trust for Public Land but currently works with Salt Landscape Architects.

Robin Marks, Salt Landscape Architects, introduced and provided background on herself and her previous experience.

Alan Compton and Robin Marks with Salt Landscape Architects, provided a presentation on Salt Landscape Architects and their experience with green alleyway projects in South Los Angeles; discussed identification of 900 linear miles of alleyways in Los Angeles; underinvested infrastructure with significant community benefit potential; the Avalon Network pilot project involving multiple alleyway stretches south of downtown; community organizing as a critical component of project success; people who did not feel comfortable walking in their neighborhood after dark; social issues; dumping; funding available for stormwater management; multi-benefit framing of the projects for stormwater management, safety, community pride, and connectivity; early outreach meetings resulting in a self-organized community group that became advocates for the project and for regional stormwater funding measures; the dedicated organizer; the stormwater management system using permeable paving with a center-line flow channel, catch basins, perforated piping, and dry wells to infiltrate water directly into the aquifer; nearly one million

gallons of stormwater per year collectively managed by the Avalon Network alleys; the addition of lighting; other alleyway projects in the same area with more standard Bureau of Engineering guidelines that incorporated community-developed narrative; signaling pedestrian usage with design elements; and a Chicago project using permeable paving across nearly the full alley width as an alternative approach.

Mayor Puza invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

Jack Gallanty discussed projects he is working on; expressed strong support for green alleyway projects; raised concern about whether Culver City alleyways would be viable given that most residential alleys back up to garages; noted the availability of grant funding; expressed support for additional green space; and suggested prioritizing alleys in areas with inadequate drainage or flooding and neighborhoods less connected to the downtown core.

Sandrine Cassidy was called to speak but did not respond.

RJ Contanta, Greener Way Associates, asked about responsibility for the long-term maintenance of trees planted in the alleys; whether lighting was solar-powered or LED; and whether path lighting from the ground had been considered for safety and aesthetics.

Alan Compton, Salt Landscape Architects, discussed lighting noting that lights installed in their project were LED and installed opportunistically on existing Department of Water and Power (DWP) poles as a gift from DWP.

Robin Marks, Salt Landscape Architects, reported that the community had been adamant that lighting be added due to security concerns; acknowledged the value of thoughtful lighting design; and indicated that ground-level path lighting is being explored for future urban trail projects but presents challenges related to copper theft and cost.

Sandrine Cassidy indicated wanting to speak on Item A-3 and agreed to wait until the end of the meeting to share her comments.

Discussion ensued between Salt Landscape Architects representatives, staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding appreciation for the presentation; clarification that the connection to Salt Landscape Architects came through Ballona Creek Renaissance (BCR); acknowledgment of the different characteristics

of Culver City alleyways; clarification that alleyways have been on the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) list as a potential project for many years; limited eligibility for certain grant funding sources as Culver City alleyways are not generally located in Disadvantaged Community (DAC) areas; identification of a pilot location fronting City-owned property; and City Council policy designating alleys as the responsibility of adjacent property owners.

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**Public Comment for Items NOT on the Agenda**

Mayor Puza invited public participation.

The following member of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

Sandrine Cassidy discussed the importance of balloon, bag, and bottle restrictions; noted that plastic debris is regularly collected from local creeks; discussed impact to environment and health; length of the process; she expressed hope that Culver City would move the measures forward promptly; observed that businesses consistently adapt to ordinances once enacted, as evidenced by the absence of hardship exemption requests under prior ordinances; noted the importance of policy; and she urged the Subcommittee to adopt the strongest possible restrictions to protect the environment and public health.

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**Items from Subcommittee Staff (Continued)**

None.

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**Items from Members**

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding the date and location for the next meeting.

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**Adjournment**

There being no further business, at 7:38 p.m., the Standing Sustainability Subcommittee of the City Council adjourned to a

meeting to be held on May 28, 2026 in the Dan Patacchia Meeting Room.

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Alicia Ide  
SECRETARY of the Culver City Sustainability Subcommittee of the  
City Council Culver City, California

APPROVED

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Freddy Puza  
MAYOR, Sustainability Subcommittee of the City Council Culver  
City, California