

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

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

September 14, 2023  
6:00 p.m.

**Call to Order & Roll Call**

Council Member Puza called the special meeting of the Sustainability Subcommittee of the City Council to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Dan Patacchia Meeting Room at City Hall and via Webex.

Present: Yasmine-Imani McMorris, Vice Mayor  
Freddy Puza, Council Member

Staff Present: Sean Singletary, Public Works Environmental Programs Operations (EPO) Manager  
Alicia Ide, Public Works Management Analyst  
Jezenia Aguirre, EPO Environmental Compliance Inspector  
Kimari Kubota, EPO Environmental Compliance Inspector

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**Pledge of Allegiance**

Council Member Puza led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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**Items from Subcommittee Members/Staff**

Alicia Ide, Management Analyst, reported that the City had joined the CivicWell organization at the suggestion of the Vice Mayor; she encouraged Council Members to make use of the site at [civicwell.org](http://civicwell.org); and she indicated they would be posting two presentations shared by the Vice Mayor from the California African American Water Education Foundation meeting to the Water Conservation and Sustainability Subcommittee Meeting pages of the City website.

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

Council Member Puza invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

David Coles expressed concern with meeting frequency; he wanted to see the City make a concerted effort to green City-owned buildings; discussed energy efficiency; the leaf blower ordinance; noted that City recycling materials indicated that 3-5 plastics were still being recycled when in fact, 3-7 plastics are no longer being recycled in the United States; discussed greenwashing; and he felt that if the public knew that 3-5 plastics were being thrown in the landfill, there would be more effort to remove them from the economy.

Sandrine Cassidy, Ballona Creek Renaissance, announced the Annual Coastal Cleanup Day on September 23; discussed volunteers; performances by Heidi Duckler Dance Troop; she asked about the date for City Council consideration of banning the 4Bs; she expressed agreement with comments made by David Coles; and she suggested that Council Members invite people to attend Sustainability Subcommittee meetings.

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**Receipt of Correspondence**

Alicia Ide, Management Analyst, indicated that no correspondence had been received.

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**Consent Calendar**

Item C-1

**Approval of Minutes for the Sustainability Subcommittee  
Special Meeting on March 23, 2023**

MOVED BY VICE MAYOR MCMORRIN, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER PUZA AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE SUSTAINABILITY SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE SPECIAL MEETING OF MARCH 23, 2023.

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**Agenda Items**

Item A-1

**Receive Report and Discuss Sustainability Initiatives at  
Local Multi-Family Complex**

Travis Morgan, from the Board of Heather Village HOA, thanked the Vice Mayor for the invitation to present; discussed the Heather Village Decarbonization Project; the complexity of upgrading a 50 year old complex to be carbon free; the goal to be a net carbon zero property by 2030; significant funding available; identification of a way to reduce carbon output by 91% with two projects; the ability to make a significant impact to the carbon footprint in a short amount of time; upfront costs; and money saved over time.

Mabel Garcia Paine, from Viridis Consulting, provided background on herself; discussed the Sustainability Grant Team; conversion of water heating; problems and opportunities that exist; feasibility; the importance of working with the

City; implications of the project; providing incentives for early adopters; scope of work; demonstrating what it means to make the conversion; homeowner education; lessons learned; existing infrastructure; the demonstration project; hot water systems at the end of life; the history of leaks with the existing natural gas distribution system; the bill shared by the homeowners; homeowner interest in upgrades; state and local governments moving toward upgrades; phasing; electrical implications; the economic analysis; the carbon analysis; available funding and incentives; the importance of City permitting and inspections to the success of the project; costs; funding; the required timeline for the grant funding; and electric panel upgrades.

Travis Morgan discussed length of time for permitting and inspections; concern that the grant deadline will be missed; and he encouraged advocacy from elected officials to help move the process along.

Mabel Garcia Paine discussed the challenging project; Homeowner Association communities; providing a roadmap for other organizations; putting Culver City on the map as a leader; the conversion from gas to electric; quantitative benefits; sharing information with others; and additional federal, state, and local funding available.

Travis Morgan discussed cost of the feasibility study and proposed that the City create and distribute a document with a roadmap on how to convert and take advantage of funding while it is available.

Discussion ensued between project representatives, staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding appreciation for the project and for the presentation; the traditional emphasis on single-family homes; cost effectiveness; the Culver City Unified School District (CCUSD) presentation on their Green New Deal in 2021; the Sustainable Business Certification Program; taking a multi-faceted approach; demonstrating viability; people who want to make changes but don't know how; future plans; Council Member advocacy to help move inspections forward; agendizing a discussion regarding a citywide Green New Deal on a future agenda, the RFP process (Request for Proposals), and the timeline; and discussed services provided by the Clean Power Alliance.

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Item A-2

**Introduction of Public Works Department Environmental Programs & Operations Division Environmental Compliance Inspectors and Update Regarding Waste Reduction Regulations**

Sean Singletary, Environmental Programs and Operations Division Manager, provided a presentation on the update of Waste Reduction Regulations; introduced new Environmental Compliance Inspectors Jezenia Aguirre and Kimari Kubota; discussed waste reduction regulations; the Polystyrene Ban; reactive enforcement; certificates of compliance; education; outreach; increased awareness with recently opened businesses; feedback; confusing ordinance language; updates to outreach materials; franchises; compliance; and next steps.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding available information; number of compliant businesses; education and outreach; refusal to comply; penalties; understanding challenges; economic impacts; businesses most likely to comply; appreciation to staff for their efforts; having sufficient resources to be successful; concern with leniency; ways to incentivize compliance; managing the growth period while the policy is being realized; enforcement methodology; information that came out during COVID; demographics of compliant business owners; providing support for those who need it; perception; and staff support of each other.

Council Member Puza invited public comment.

The following member of the public addressed the subcommittee:

David Coles expressed appreciation to staff; requested clarification regarding hot cup polystyrene lids; discussed previous staffing challenges; proactive enforcement; leniency with enforcement; scofflaw businesses that have been repeatedly reported; compliance with environmental laws; impacts of plastics in the ocean; guidance regarding enforcement; franchises that have trouble with procurement; and the ability of California to impact corporate headquarters with strong plastic and waste reduction ordinances.

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Item A-3

**Discuss Use of Reusable Containers for Takeout and Delivery**

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding taking Items A-3 and A-4 together, and it was reported that the vendor Buoy was not in attendance but would hopefully present at the next meeting.

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Item A-4

**Discuss Use of Reusable Food Containers at City Events**

Sean Singletary, Environmental Programs and Operations Division, provided background on efforts regarding use of reusable containers.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding reasonable plateware; use of cups rather than single-use water bottles; and reusable items.

Council Member Puza invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

David Coles indicated wanting to reserve his comments for after receipt of the presentation by the vendor.

Darrel Menthe, Culver City Downtown Business Association, noted that restaurants already have reusable plates; discussed restaurants with brandable high-end materials; customer use of and return of materials; cost effectiveness; image; and he felt that the program was useful and worth pursuing.

Sandrine Cassidy expressed appreciation to staff for the presentation; discussed work done over the past few years;

the new team in place; support for following recommendations; motivation to move forward; the volunteer-based organization to clean up the Creek; continued presence of polystyrene; support for stronger enforcement; the need for stronger bans in the region; the plastic bag ban; loopholes; different bans in other cities; research into reusable items; incremental change; the Culver City Sustainable Business Certification Program; state resources to help with changes; case studies on cost savings by switching from disposables to reusables; she offered to provide her insight into the process; discussed compliance with the law; education vs. financial compliance; the exemption clause in all of the laws if it is harmful to the businesses; resistance; reusable straws; she expressed appreciation for support over the years; and she felt that Culver City was an innovator and at the forefront of change.

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

Council Member Puza invited public participation.

The following members of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

Danielle Sheppard, California Center for Climate Change Education at West Los Angeles College, provided background on the organization; invited everyone to attend their upcoming three day Climate Action-Palooza; discussed funding; partnerships between the City and the county; panels; meeting market demand; filling skills gaps; cross-dialog conversations; participation by area institutions; event funding; future partnerships with the City and the county for the annual event; participation by high school students; Youth Activism Day; keynote speakers; she inquired about City endorsement of the event; and she provided fliers for the event.

Marilyn Chavez, California Center for Climate Change Education at West Los Angeles College, discussed programming for the three day event; workforce development; different speakers and workshops offered; and available positions for tabling to provide additional education.

Discussion ensued between meeting attendees, staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding the regular sponsorship process; off-cycle sponsorships; making public comment at City Council meetings; incorporation of climate action focused lessons in different subjects; and the vision of having other colleges approaching West Los Angeles College for sample lessons.

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**Items from Subcommittee Members/Staff**

Vice Mayor McMorris discussed future agenda items; requested an update on the CCUSD Green New Deal; an update on the Zero Waste program at City Hall; and she noted the importance of being more intentional about community education efforts.

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

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**Adjournment**

There being no further business, at 7:43 p.m., the Sustainability Subcommittee of the City Council adjourned to November 9, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

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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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Yasmine-Imani McMorris  
VICE MAYOR, Sustainability Subcommittee of the City Council  
Culver City, California