

**MINUTES**  
**SIERRA MADRE ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT  
& NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**  
**WEDNESDAY**  
**April 20, 2016 7:00PM**  
**City Hall – Council Chambers**  
**232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.**

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The meeting began at 7:00pm. Analyst Carlson called roll. All Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Dasher who was excused.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Cossutta led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion to approve the agenda:

Kelley

Second:

Shuster

Vote:

Unanimous

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*Commissioner Shuster provided clarifications for the March 16, 2016 Commission minutes.*

Motion to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2016 meeting, with clarifications:

Cossutta

Second:

Robinson

Vote:

Unanimous

**STAFF AND COMMISSION MEMBER  
REPORTS**

*Analyst Carlson reviewed the Public Works Department report. He provided a few highlights and updates to the materials included in the staff report.*

*Chair Blanchard asked about updates on NPDES and Analyst Carlson summarized a recent meeting at the Regional Board on possible approaches to address the Bacteria TMDL.*

*Chair Blanchard remarked that the update on Mosquito and Vector control was interesting and Analyst Carlson further explained the importance of the group's work, but also the concern that some of the stormwater projects may have on their efforts.*

*Analyst Carlson provided additional information regarding a private protected tree that was denied a removal permit.*

*There was a question about the eWaste event hosted by Alverno*

*High School and the date needs to be re-checked.*

*Commissioner Kelley informed the Commission that she received a call from a person in Ventura regarding the prospective waste-to-energy project. He put Commissioner Kelley in touch with a person that works with the bio-char material. She explained that palm fronds are difficult to dispose of, however the material is very good for producing bio-char. She also indicated that there is a representative from UC Riverside that might be interested in the project on a research level. She continued to update the Commission with her awaiting contact from Athens Services regarding what may be next with the prospective project. She indicated that Cobe with the County is waiting to help us do all the grant writing, funding, permitting and engineering completed. She indicated that funding may not be available for ongoing operations, but it is there for the capital improvement.*

*Commissioner Rossutta provided an idea for Water Conservation in light of 'commonly held values' and that was to include the discolored water problems with conservation messaging. She also provided an update to her 'Walking Schoolbus' program; she has indicated that members of the school and district are enthusiastic about the idea and that the event that occurs the day before the school year will include a 'Walking Wednesdays' program for next year. It will require some volunteer badges for parents. She is pleased with the progress.*

*She also provided additional water conservation ideas including a 'water corps' similar to the 'peace corps' idea. It would include volunteers with some experience to assist Director Inman with helping residents to improve their conservation.*

*She also suggested that, perhaps at the discretion of the Planning Commissions, that the price of a dry well be added to each building permit.*

*She also added an idea to have Planning Commission look to disallow chain link fences, even temporary, to address the zinc issue.*

*Commissioner Shuster suggested a water conservation idea that included a simple idea to get 'double use' of the water. If you use the bucket in the shower at the beginning, and instead of putting it in the yard, it could be used for the toilet bowl.*

*Commissioner Robinson indicated that there is a way to fill the toilet directly into the bowl, you get the feel of how to do it after a while and it is easier than filling the tank.*

*Commissioner Butler suggested making YouTube videos out of these ideas and then have them go viral, perhaps with a character like the unknown comic.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**  
**(Items not on the agenda)**

*There was no public comment.*

**ACTION ITEMS**

**1. FUTURE COMMISSION BUSINESS:**  
**The Commission will continue its discussion on the future agenda items of the Commission.**

*Analyst Carlson introduced the item with a brief summary of the environmental accords that were abandoned a couple years prior. He also provided a General Plan Implementation matrix that also included tasks that were identified for EENRC assistance.*

*Chair Blanchard brought up a concept she discovered by an organization in Portland's Friends of the Trees. She described how this program could be incorporated in Sierra Madre, particularly when we would be able to plant new city trees. The program could include information sheets on care, watering, and things to watch for. Perhaps there could be some sort of "in-house" training from a local arborist to train Commissioners to be extensions of the information.*

*Commissioner Cossutta recounted information regarding refillable bags to be used for newly planted trees. Chair Blanchard mentioned that they are somewhat expensive, and there are also enforcement considerations on watering parkway trees. Potential ideas regarding this program was discussed. Chair Blanchard informed the Commission that she would take the lead on the development of this potential program.*

*The Commissioners were unclear on how the documents would be used to formulate future commission business. Analyst Carlson provided a few examples of how some of the items would or would not fit the 4 items expressly identified by the Council.*

*The Commissioners had a discussion on how some recent commission work and a recent presentation from Athens Services would or would not fit into the components of the Accords. The discussion evolved into a recounting of concerns regarding Athens Canyon Collection program.*

Motion to put Athens Canyon program on the agenda for next month:

Second: Kelley  
Shuster  
Vote: Unanimous

*The Commission continued to briefly review a number of the other items listed in the Accords and had brief discussions on whether they would continue to be a priority or possibly omitted from the list. They also discussed how some of the General Plan Implementation matrix would fit into the accords organization.*

*During the discussion, it was noticed that some of the Accords items may fall under the consideration by more than just the EENRC Commission.*

Motion to put a discussion on approaching and possibly working with other City Commissions on future items at a future meeting:

Second: Cossutta  
Butler  
Vote: Unanimous

**2. PUBLIC OUTREACH: The Commission will discuss public outreach ideas and efforts including recognition programs.**

*Analyst Carlson reviewed the report, highlighting the efforts to re-engage the Water Conservation publicity efforts with a list of items that are planned in the next few months.*

*Analyst Carlson also reviewed the Earth Day publicity pointing out how the "Fantastic Front yards" program had morphed from a previous public outreach idea.*

*He suggested adding outreach concerning the Legacy Tree program and Adopt-a-Tree program which would be timely after the next warm season.*

*Commissioner Kelley suggested that a monthly award not be specifically tied to front yards but also other water conservation efforts as well. They could receive a rock and/or article in the paper each month for these efforts.*

*Commissioner Butler provided additional rocks inscribed "You Rock" and other variations to the Commission for comments.*

**3. NEW BUSINESS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS:** Commission members may request staff to agendaize items for future Energy, Environment & Natural Resources Commission meetings.

*The Commission expressed interest in obtaining more information on how the recent film event went and ways to improve for the future. It was determined to see if Commissioner Dasher would be able to provide an "after action report" on the event.*

**4. ADJOURNMENT:** The Commission will adjourn to the next regularly scheduled meeting; May 18, 2016 at 7:00pm at the City Hall Council Chambers, 232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.

Motion to adjourn:

Kelley

Second

Robinson

Vote:

Unanimous