

Energy and Environmental Resources Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 13, 2021
*REVISED



The audio file for this meeting can be found at: <http://www.cvag.org/audio.htm>

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order by Chair Linda Evans, City of La Quinta, at 12:00 p.m. via Zoom, pursuant to Gov. Newsom’s executive order governing how public meetings are held during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2. ROLL CALL** – Roll call was taken and it was determined that a quorum was present.

Members Present

Vice Mayor Joseph DeConinck
Councilmember Nancy Ross
Councilmember Neftali Galarza
Mayor Pro Tem Russell Betts
Councilmember Donna Griffith
Councilmember Oscar Ortiz, Vice Chair
Mayor Linda Evans, Chair
Councilmember Gina Nestande
Councilmember Dennis Woods
Mayor Pro Tem Charles Townsend
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez
Director Alex Cardenas
President Nancy Wright
Chairman Jeff Grubbe

Agency

City of Blythe
City of Cathedral City
City of Coachella
City of Desert Hot Springs
City of Indian Wells
City of Indio, *joined during Item 6A*
City of La Quinta
City of Palm Desert, *left during 6A*
City of Palm Springs
City of Rancho Mirage
Riverside County – District 4
Imperial Irrigation District, *arrived during Item 6A*
Mission Springs Water District
Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

Ex-Officio Members Present

Supervisor Jeff Hewitt

Riverside County – District 5

Others Present

Tom Kirk	CVAG
Katie Barrows	CVAG
Benjamin Druyon	CVAG
Trisha Stull	CVAG
Erica Felci	CVAG
Joanna Stueckle	CVAG
Peter Satin	CVAG
Oscar Vizcarra	CVAG
Valdemar Galeana	CVAG
Kathleen Brundige	CVAG
Tory Brewster	CivicSpark Fellow
Margaret Park	Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
Chuck Parker	Salton Sea Coalition
Deborah McGarrey	Southern California Gas Co.
Jennifer Cusack	Southern California Edison
Emmanuel Martinez	Imperial Irrigation District
Shant Nahapetian	Southern California Edison
Frank Oswalt	Imperial Irrigation District

John Knobel
Pat Cooper
Art Gertz
Brandee Keith
Joy Silver
Brandon Ebeck
JB Hamby
Jasmyn Phillips

Assemblyman Chad Mayes' Office
Riverside County District 4
West Shores

One individual joined the meeting but did not provide a full name; Three individuals joined by phone

Members & Ex-Officios Not Present

Board Member Anthony Bianco
Board Member Patricia Oygar

Coachella Valley Water District
Desert Water Agency

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Chuck Parker, of the Salton Sea Coalition, commented on Item 6D regarding the wording of the Committee's goals and objectives and asked CVAG to monitor lithium extraction in the Salton Sea area.

Art Gertz, Vice-Mayor of West Shores, commented on Item 6D that the Salton Sea provides increases rainfall through evaporation.

4. COMMITTEE MEMBER / DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Katie Barrows shared that Patrick O'Dowd of the Salton Sea Authority will give an update on the Salton Sea at the Committee's June meeting.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR PRO TEM TOWNSEND AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER GRIFFITH TO:

A. Approve April 8, 2021 Committee Meeting Minutes

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 12 AYES AND 3 MEMBERS ABSENT.

Vice Mayor Joey DeConinck	Aye
Councilmember Nancy Ross	Aye
Councilmember Neftali Galarza	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Russell Betts	Aye
Councilmember Donna Griffith	Aye
Councilmember Oscar Ortiz	Absent
Mayor Linda Evans	Aye
Councilmember Gina Nestande	Aye

Councilmember Dennis Woods	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Charles Townsend	Aye
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez	Aye
Board Member Anthony Bianco	Absent
Director Alex Cardenas	Absent
President Nancy Wright	Aye
Chairman Jeff Grubbe	Aye

6. DISCUSSION / ACTION

A. Electrifying the Coachella Valley: Incentives & Rebates for EVs

Shant Nahapetian of Southern California Edison, and Emmanuel Martinez of Imperial Irrigation District described the electric vehicle programs and rebates offered by both agencies. Member discussion ensued.

There was no action taken as this was an informational item.

B. IID, CVWD and the 1934 Agreement of Compromise for providing electric service in the Coachella Valley

Frank Oswalt of Imperial Irrigation District shared the history of the agreement between IID and CVWD, and weighed in on recent discussions about how the Coachella Valley is represented on the IID Board. John Knobel of Assemblymember Chad Mayes' office shared the Assemblymember's concerns regarding the Coachella Valley's lack of representation and discussed legislative efforts to change that. Member discussion ensued.

Due to the complexity of the issues, and a need for more conversation, the Committee, at the recommendation of Chair Evans, continue the discussion to a future meeting.

C. Appointment of Regional Representative to SCAG Policy Committee

Peter Satin introduced the staff report, and noted CVAG's policy to review SCAG committee assignments every two years. Councilmember Ortiz expressed his desire to continue as the representative to SCAG's Energy and Environment Committee.

IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR PRO TEM BETTS AND SECONDED BY SUPERVISOR PEREZ TO APPOINT COUNCILMEMBER ORTIZ AS THE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE TO SCAG'S ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 13 AYES AND 2 MEMBERS ABSENT.

Vice Mayor Joey DeConinck	Aye
Councilmember Nancy Ross	Aye
Councilmember Neftali Galarza	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Russell Betts	Aye
Councilmember Donna Griffith	Aye
Councilmember Oscar Ortiz	Aye
Mayor Linda Evans	Aye

Councilmember Gina Nestande	Absent
Councilmember Dennis Woods	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Charles Townsend	Aye
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez	Aye
Board Member Anthony Bianco	Absent
Director Alex Cardenas	Aye
President Nancy Wright	Aye
Chairman Jeff Grubbe	Aye

D. Goals and Objectives for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Katie Barrows introduced the goals and objectives, which had been updated based on feedback at the April committee meeting. Members discussed final changes and additional language as it pertained to the Salton Sea.

***REVISION MADE:** At the June 10, 2021 meeting, Mayor Pro Tem Russell Betts requested the Goals & Objectives be included as part of the minutes.

IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR EVANS AND SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEM BETTS TO ADOPT THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022 AS REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE.

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 12 AYES, 1 ABSTENTION AND 2 MEMBERS ABSENT.

Vice Mayor Joey DeConinck	Aye
Councilmember Nancy Ross	Aye
Councilmember Neftali Galarza	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Russell Betts	Aye
Councilmember Donna Griffith	Aye
Councilmember Oscar Ortiz	Aye
Mayor Linda Evans	Aye
Councilmember Gina Nestande	Absent
Councilmember Dennis Woods	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Charles Townsend	Aye
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez	Aye
Board Member Anthony Bianco	Absent
Director Alex Cardenas	Abstain
President Nancy Wright	Aye
Chairman Jeff Grubbe	Aye

7. INFORMATION – The following item was provided in the agenda for information only:

A. Attendance Record

B. Meeting Reimbursements for Elected Committee Members

C. Desert Cities Energy Partnership Final Report

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next scheduled meeting via Zoom:

- Energy & Environmental Resources Committee – June 10, 2021 at 12:00 p.m.
- Executive Committee – June 7, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.

10. ADJOURN – Chair Evans adjourned the meeting at 1:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trisha Stull

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

FISCAL YEAR 2021/2022

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Energy and Environmental Resources Department goals and objectives integrate a valley-wide commitment to resource conservation and sustainability. The Energy and Environmental Resources Committee provides a forum for our member jurisdictions to highlight past and present successes, provide updates on progress toward resource conservation and sustainability goals, and discuss environmental issues and opportunities for collaboration. The Committee adopted the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 goals and objectives for coordination of regional conservation and sustainable use of our resources.

I. Policy Statement

The Energy & Environmental Resources Committee recognizes the importance of monitoring policy initiatives and legislation related to these environmental goals. Where appropriate, the Committee may vote to recommend that CVAG advocate on behalf of those efforts that are consistent with adopted goals and objectives, support funding streams and resources to advance environmental programs, and provide input to ensure that the Coachella Valley region is represented.

II. Water Conservation and Water Quality:

Promote long-term conservation of water resources and support efforts to maintain a clean, reliable, and sustainable water supply in the Coachella Valley.

Objectives:

1. Collaborate with member jurisdictions, local water agencies, and other partners to promote water infrastructure needed to deliver clean drinking water as an environmental justice and quality of life benefit for the east valley and throughout the Coachella Valley.
2. Collaborate with member jurisdictions and local water agencies to promote valley-wide per capita water conservation; any metric used to measure progress needs to recognize past efforts to conserve water. Work with CV Water Counts, a collaborative of valley water agencies.
3. Partner with member agencies and partners to implement innovative programs, policies, and best practices, to achieve sustainable water use.

III. Salton Sea Restoration:

CVAG strongly supports efforts to maintain and revitalize the Salton Sea.

Objectives:

1. Continue to support Salton Sea revitalization as opportunities and/or requests for support arise.
2. Provide Committee members with updates on geothermal and other energy development in the Salton Sea region, as well as lithium development, particularly as related to environmental impacts and potential funding for Salton Sea restoration.
3. Provide information to the member jurisdictions and support efforts to restore and revitalize the Salton Sea including the North Lake Concept being developed by the Salton Sea Authority.

4. Coordinate with Coachella Valley Water District at the north end of Salton Sea to promote water conservation and water quality.
5. Support the concept of importation of ocean water from the Sea of Cortez as part of the restoration of the Salton Sea, as endorsed by nine cities and other agencies within the Coachella Valley.

IV. Energy Efficiency/Conservation:

The goal of the energy efficiency program is to encourage awareness about energy use and to initiate, encourage, and promote energy conservation and energy efficiency initiatives within the Coachella Valley and Palo Verde Valley.

Objectives:

1. Explore collaborative solutions with Imperial Irrigation District (IID) and other partners to ensure electricity service is maintained for Riverside County customers after the expiration of the 1934 Agreement of Compromise between IID and Coachella Valley Water District. Consider and discuss alternatives with IID and all stakeholders.
2. Continue development of a Regional Energy Network to compliment the efforts of the Desert Cities Energy Partnership. Collaborate with member jurisdictions, local utilities and other partners.
3. Continue regional PACE programs with various PACE providers, monitor program effectiveness and provide quarterly updates to Energy & Environmental Resources Committee.
4. Continue with Community Choice Aggregation program in the region through Desert Community Energy.
5. Promote and provide information on opportunities that could benefit energy consumers in the CVAG region, including energy storage (long-duration battery storage, pumped energy storage), community solar, and microgrids.
6. Promote implementation of green building, energy efficiency, and zero net energy buildings.

V. Air Quality:

The goals of the Air Quality program are to improve the air quality in the Coachella Valley and to reduce the impacts of PM₁₀ through regional coordination.

Objectives:

1. Implement a study in partnership with South Coast Air Quality Management District to evaluate and improve effectiveness of the Regional Street Sweeping program.
2. Support implementation of the Community Air Monitoring Plans for the Eastern Coachella Valley that will track air quality actions prioritized by the community to reduce local exposure to harmful air pollutants.
3. Monitor implementation of South Coast Air Quality Management District's Coachella Valley Extreme Area Ozone Plan to ensure progress in reducing pollutants emitted upwind and transported to the Coachella Valley, to demonstrate improved air quality and attainment of the federal ozone standard. There is very little impact from local emission sources on ozone levels in Coachella Valley.
4. Evaluate the use of and impact of gas-powered leaf blowers.
5. Support restoration and related activities for the Salton Sea to limit impacts to regional air quality and health.

6. Monitor air quality issues, including PM10, in the eastern Coachella Valley and valley-wide; coordinate established PM10 mitigation efforts with member jurisdictions and the South Coast Air Quality Management District.
7. Promote air quality and emissions reduction through development of the CV Link project.
8. Continue ongoing programs including collaboration with the South Coast Air Quality Management District to support air quality legislative efforts, monitoring of the Landscape Model Ordinance and other air quality programs.

VI. Sustainable Resource Use:

Significant efforts have been made by CVAG jurisdictions to promote sustainable resource use. A goal is to continue to highlight past successes by CVAG's member jurisdictions and identify future opportunities to promote sustainable resource use.

Objectives:

1. Provide opportunities for information sharing among member jurisdictions at Committee meetings so members can learn about other member agency projects on energy, resource conservation, livability, and sustainability.
2. Identify and encourage opportunities for access to biogas, biofuels and hydrogen fuels.
3. Promote and seek funding for implementation of the Regional Plug-in Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan, completed in 2014.

VII. Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction:

Coordinate efforts to enhance awareness of climate change and ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Objectives:

1. Explore a "1,000 Trees Initiative" and urban greening opportunities for the Coachella Valley to promote greenhouse gas friendly trees that are also suited for the climate. Gather information on what member agencies are doing and examples from other regions.
2. Develop an urban greening guide for local jurisdictions and the region, with support from CVAG CivicSpark Fellow.
3. Promote and support local jurisdictions' efforts, as well as regional greenhouse gas reductions strategies. Track and highlight progress on local jurisdiction goals for greenhouse gas reduction.
4. Identify regional needs for climate adaptation and climate resilience. Consider climate action and resilience planning recommendations for the desert region.
5. Provide a minimum of two workshop/training opportunities for member agencies on tools to implement climate action/sustainability plans and track progress.

VIII. Solid Waste:

Increase the reduction, recycling and reuse of solid wastes through regional coordination.

Objectives:

1. Develop a regional program in collaboration with member jurisdictions to promote organic waste recycling and surplus food recovery consistent with SB 1383. Work with FIND, Burrtec, and local businesses including hotels, hospitals, food service industry to promote recycling and reuse through collaborative programs. Involve the Recycling Roundtable of member agency staff in this effort.
2. Explore opportunities for waste to energy and biogas projects.
3. Identify opportunities with member jurisdictions to promote composting as a way to

- encourage waste reduction and recycling.
4. Continue our ongoing program Used Oil Recycling Program and regional coordination on Household Hazardous Waste collection. Re-initiate a Waste Tire Recycling Program.
 5. Work with member jurisdictions on ways to encourage waste reduction, recycling and reuse.

IX. Report Card:

Develop and maintain a “report card” through semi-annual evaluations of the Coachella Valley’s progress toward sustainability goals.